CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method comprising:

2 receiving an instruction relating to a database, said database comprising an

3 association between a plurality of events available at a plurality of sending clients and a

4 plurality of receiving clients eligible to receive selected ones of the plurality of events;

5 and

6 processing the instruction based on the database.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the database comprises a hierarchical, directed

2 group structure in which clients and events are assigned to groups, and wherein clients

3 assigned to a particular group are eligible for events assigned to the particular group as

4 well as events assigned to all ancestor groups of the particular group.

1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a new client instruction,

2 said new client instruction including a client identifier and a group identifier, and wherein

3 processing the instruction comprises:

4 assigning a client indicated by the client identifier to a group indicated by the

5 group identifier.

1 4. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a ticket instruction, said

2 ticket instruction including a particular group identifier, and wherein processing the

3 instruction comprises:

4   generating a ticket based on the particular group identifier, said ticket

5 summarizing a set of events for which clients assigned to a group identified with the

6 particular group identifier are eligible; and

7   providing the ticket for a particular client assigned to the particular group.

1 5. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a key instruction, said key

2 instruction referring to a particular event summarized on a ticket for a particular client,

3 and wherein processing the instruction comprises:

4   providing keying information to facilitate the event between the particular client

5 and at least one additional client.

1 6. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a new event instruction,

2 said new event instruction including a group identifier and an event identifier, said event

3 identifier indicating an event available from a particular client assigned to a group

4 indicated by the particular group identifier, and wherein processing the instruction

5 comprises:

6   assigning the event indicated by the event identifier to the group indicated by the

7 group identifier.

1 7. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a delete instruction, said

2 delete instruction including a group identifier and an entity identifier, said entity identifier

3 comprising one of a client identifier and a content identifier, and wherein processing the

4 instruction comprises:

5   deleting an entity indicated by the entity identifier from a group indicated by the

6 group identifier.

1   8. The method of claim 2 wherein the instruction comprises a modification instruction,

2   said modification instruction including a group identifier, modification information, and

3   an entity identifier, said entity identifier comprising one of a client identifier and a

4   content identifier, and wherein processing the instruction comprises:

5   modifying an entity indicated by the entity identifier and assigned to a group

6   indicated by the group identifier with the modification information.

1   9. The method of claim 1 wherein the database is shared by a ticketing server and a

2   keying server.

1   10. The method of claim 9 wherein the ticketing server and the keying server are

2   located remotely from one another.

1   11. A machine readable storage medium having stored thereon machine executable

2   instructions, execution of said machine readable instructions to implement a method

3   comprising:

4   receiving an instruction relating to a database, said database comprising an

5   association between a plurality of events available at a plurality of sending clients and a

6   plurality of receiving clients eligible to receive selected ones of the plurality of events;

7   and

8   processing the instruction based on the database.

1   12. The machine readable storage medium of claim 11 wherein the database

2   comprises a hierarchical, directed group structure in which clients and events are

3   assigned to groups, and wherein clients assigned to a particular group are eligible for

4   events assigned to the particular group as well as events assigned to all ancestor

5   groups of the particular group.

1   13. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a new client instruction, said new client instruction including a client identifier

3   ·and a group identifier, and wherein processing the instruction comprises:

4   assigning a client indicated by the client identifier to a group indicated by the

5   group identifier.

1   14. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a ticket instruction, said ticket instruction including a particular group

3   identifier, and wherein processing the instruction comprises:

4   generating a ticket based on the particular group identifier, said ticket

5   summarizing a set of events for which clients assigned to a group identified with the

6   particular group identifier are eligible; and

7   providing the ticket for a particular client assigned to the particular group.

1   15. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a key instruction, said key instruction referring to a particular event

3   summarized on a ticket for a particular client, and wherein processing the instruction

4   comprises:

5   providing keying information to facilitate the event between the particular client

6   and at least one additional client.

1   16. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a new event instruction, said new event instruction including a group

3   identifier and an event identifier, said event identifier indicating an event available from

4   a particular client assigned to a group indicated by the particular group identifier, and

5   wherein processing the instruction comprises:

6   assigning the event indicated by the event identifier to the group indicated by the

7   group identifier.

1   17. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a delete instruction, said delete instruction including a group identifier and an

3   entity identifier, said entity identifier comprising one of a client identifier and a content

4   identifier, and wherein processing the instruction comprises:

5   deleting an entity indicated by the entity identifier from a group indicated by the

6   group identifier.

1   18. The machine readable storage medium of claim 12 wherein the instruction

2   comprises a modification instruction, said modification instruction including a group

3   identifier, modification information, and an entity identifier, said entity identifier

4   comprising one of a client identifier and a content identifier, and wherein processing the

5   instruction comprises:

6   modifying an entity indicated by the entity identifier and assigned to a group

7   indicated by the group identifier with the modification information.

1   19. A management server apparatus comprising:

2   a port to receive an instruction relating to a database, said database comprising

3   an association between a plurality of events available at a plurality of sending clients

4   and a plurality of receiving clients eligible to receive selected ones of the plurality of

5   events; and

6   a processing unit to process the instruction based on the database.